

REMARKS

The present Amendment amends claims 21, 31, and 33; cancels claims 28-30; and adds claims 41 and 42. Upon entry of this Amendment, claims 21-27 and 31-42 will be pending. Accordingly, the application presents nineteen (19) claims, of which claim 21 is in independent form. For any fees which are deemed necessary following submittal of this Amendment, the undersigned hereby authorizes such fees to be charged to our deposit account, Deposit Account No. 061910.

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 21, 23, 24, 28-33, and 35-40 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Aschner et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,005,226); rejected claims 21, 22, 25, 27-29, and 32-40 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Burk, Jr. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,788,777); rejected claims 21, 22, 25, 27, 28, and 31-40 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Paisley et al. (U.S. Pub. No. 2002/0090454); and rejected claim 26 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Paisley et al. Applicants respectfully traverse the above 102(b), 102(e), and 103(a) rejections. However, in an effort to facilitate the prosecution of this application, Applicants now amend claim 21 as shown above to incorporate additional features of the invention which had been at least partially included in now canceled claims 29 and 30. Applicants assert that none of the cited references, solely or in combination, teach the features now included in newly amended claim 21.

For example, Applicants believe that none of the references cited disclose a plurality of channels wherein *each of said channels has a depth that gradually reduces along its extent*. This feature of the invention is discussed in paragraphs [0043], [0044], and [0070] of Applicants' originally filed disclosure, now published as U.S. Pub. No. 2006/0054091. As discussed therein, channels with a depth reducing along their extent are useful because the shallower portions of the channels considerably increase the fluid-dynamic drive.

Conversely, Applicants assert that Aschner et al. fails to teach channels having gradual reduction of depth along their extent. Fig. 19b provides air flow channels 1930 and 1940 stemming from air flow channel 1920; however, none of the channels 1920, 1930, and 1940, either considered singly or collectively, are shown to have a *gradual depth reduction along their extent*. At best, Aschner may be observed as having a depth reduction at junctions between channels 1920 and 1930 as well as 1920 and 1940; however, such does not represent

gradual depth reductions along the extent of the channels, but rather abrupt reductions occurring only along the junctions of two joined channels each having differing sizes. Further, Aschner et al. makes no mention of the channels 1920, 1930, and 1940 having a gradual depth reduction along their extent when describing Fig. 19b at col. 6, lines 34-41. As such, Applicants assert that claim 21, as now amended, overcomes the 102(b) rejection of claim 21 with respect to Aschner et al.

Applicants also note that neither Burk, Jr. nor Paisley et al. disclose or suggest channels having a reduced depth along their extent. Burk, Jr. does not teach reducing depths when discussing gas passageways 100, or gas channels 106 (see col. 4, lines 10-16 and line 65- col. 5 line 11). Paisley et al. teaches main drive channels 168, but does not describe the channels to have a depth which reduces along the extent of the channels (see paragraphs 36, 39, and 42). Hence, Applicants assert that claim 21, as now amended, also overcomes the 102(b) and 102(e) rejections of claim 21 with respect to Burk, Jr. and Paisley, respectively.

Given the above discussion, Applicants assert that the present 102(b) and 102(e) rejections with respect to claim 21 have been overcome, thereby placing claim 21 in condition for allowance. As such, the allowance of claim 21 as described and shown above thereby renders claims 22-27 and 31-40 also allowable.

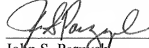
Dependent claims 41 and 42 have been added to further provide additional features of the invention. Accordingly, the allowance of claim 21 would further render both claims 41 and 42 also allowable.

Applicants believe that no new matter is introduced by entry of these amendments and that the amendments are fully supported by the specification and application as a whole. Applicants have amended certain claims solely to advance prosecution of this application and to obtain the allowance of claims at the earliest possible date. No admission should be inferred by these amendments. Applicants reserve the right to prosecute the originally filed claims in a continuation application.

In light of the above, Applicants submit that the present rejections should be withdrawn and prompt allowance of this application is respectfully requested. If the Examiner feels that prosecution of the present application can be materially advanced by a telephonic interview, the undersigned would welcome a call at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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